

## Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 OMB-01 ACDA-19 MC-02 NIC-01

SAJ-01 DRC-01 /153 W

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R 221155Z MAY 74 ZFF-6

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6790

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

USINT DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 3427

JERUSALEM PLEASE PASS SECRETARY'S PARTY

ZFF JERUSALEM ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG UR

SUBJ: TASS CORRESPONDENT'S REMARKS ON EGYPTIAN RELATED ISSUES

FOLLOWING REMARKS AND QUESTIONS EMERGED IN MAY 21 CONVERSATION  
BETWEEN EMBOFF AND DEPUTY CHIEF OF TASS AGENCY IN CAIRO  
YEDRASHNIKOV.

1. SOVIET/EGYPTIAN RELATIONS. YEDRASHNIKOV STATED THAT ALTHOUGH  
RELATIONS APPEARED TO HAVE STABILIZED BRIEFLY, GENERAL TREND WAS  
STILL DOWNWARD. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT EGYPTIAN SUSPICION OF USSR  
HAD INCREASED AS RESULT OF JALLUD'S VISIT TO MOSCOW (SEE BELOW),

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AND THAT SOVIET POLICY OF WITHHOLDING OFFENSIVE WEAPONRY FROM

EGYPT WHILE SUPPLYING SUCH WEAPONRY TO OTHER ARAB STATES-- SYRIA IN PARTICULAR--WAS MORE THAN A MERE IRRITANT. YEDRASHNIKOV SAID THERE WERE COUNTERVAILING FACTORS: EARLY IN MAY, FOR EXAMPLE, NEWLY APPOINTED MININFO ABUL MEGD INSTRUCTED EGYPTIAN PRESS TO TONE DOWN SHARP CRITICISM OF USSR, AND EGYPTIANS CONTINUED TO EXPRESS INTEREST IN SOVIET ASSISTANCE ON MATTERS SUCH AS RECONSTRUCTION OF CANAL CITIES (YEDRASHNIKOV SAID THAT SOVIET DELEGATION SENT TO EGYPT IN MARCH TO DISCUSS CANAL ASSISTANCE WAS STILL IN CAIRO). NEVERTHELESS, U.S. CONTINUED TO MOVE AHEAD WHILE FUTURE OF SOVIET PRESENCE IN EGYPT REMAINED UNCERTAIN. YEDRASHNIKOV THEN SAID THAT HE WAS TRYING TO DETERMINE WHERE THE BOTTOM OF THE SOVIET/EGYPTIAN RELATONSHIP LAY: HE NOTED SECRETARY KISSINGER'S DISCUSSIONS WITH SADAT AND ASKED POINTEDLY WHETHER U.S. HAD ASKED EGYPT TO TERMINATE SOVIET USE OF EGYPTIAN FACILITIES SUCH AS MERSA MATRUH. EMBOFF REPLIED THAT HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE WHATSOEVER OF ANY SUCH REQUEST, AND ASKED YEDRASHNIKOV WHETHER HE HAD ANY INFORMATION TO THIS EFFECT. YEDRASHNIKOV REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT, BUT WAS SIMPLY PUTTING FORWARD A WORST-CASE THEORY.

2. EMBOFF ASKED YEDRASHNIKOV ABOUT BREZHNEV LETTER TO SADAT REPORTEDLY (BY CAIRO PRESS) DELIVERED TO FAHMY BY NEW SOVIET AMBASSADOR POLIAKOV, AND ABOUT RUMORS OF FORTHCOMING VISIT BY BREZHNEV TO CAIRO. YEDRASHNIKOV CONFIRMED THAT POLIAKOV DID IN FACT TRANSMIT LETTER TO FAHMY FOR SADAT. REGARDING BREZHNEV VISIT TO EGYPT, HOWEVER, EGYPTIAN PRESS REPORTS WERE SOMEWHAT MISLEADING. USSR WAS INTERESTED IN CLOSING OF RELATIONS WITH EGYPT, AND INVITATION HAD BEEN EXTENDED TO SADAT TO VISIT MOSCOW. EGYPTIANS HAD INDICATED THAT SADAT HAD NO INTEREST IN MAKING FIFTH TRIP TO SOVIET UNION UNTIL BREZHNEV HAD APPEARED IN CAIRO, AND YEDRASHNIKOV THOUGHT THAT ARTICLES IN CAIRO PRESS COULD BE PART OF GOE ATTEMPT TO PRESSURE BREZHNEV INTO VISITING EGYPT. HE ADDED THAT SUCH A VISIT APPEARED UNLIKELY IN VIEW OF "UNSUITABLE" ATMOSPHERE IN CAIRO AT PRESENT TIME.

3. DIVERSIFICATION OF WEAPON SUPPLIES. YEDRASHNIKOV SAID THAT EGYPTIANS WERE SEEKING TO DIVERSIFY THEIR SOURCES OF WEAPONS BY APPROACHING NORTH KOREANS, ROMANIANS, AND PRC, AND POSSIBLY CONFIDENTIAL

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YUGOSLAVIA. HE HAD NO DETAILS ON RESULTS OF THESE APPROACHES, BUT DID NOT BELIEVE THAT FULL AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED WITH ROMANIA YET. (COMMENT: CAIRO 3394 REPORTS ON YUGOSLAV/EGYPTIAN MILITARY COOPERATION. REGARDING OTHER SOURCES, CAIRO PRESS HAS NOTED VISITS TO EGYPT OF ROMANIAN DEFENSE MINISTER, APRIL 23-30; MEETING BETWEEN EGYPTIAN WAR MINISTER ISMAIL AND DEPUTY COMMANDER OF PRC LIBERATION ARMY ON JAN 20; AND ARRIVAL IN CAIRO OF DPRK DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE ON JANUARY 28. CAIRO 2610,

ADDITIONALLY REPORTS ON VISIT OF DPRK DEPUTY PRIMIN  
WHICH SAW GOE REQUEST ASSISTANCE FROM NORTH KOREANS IN  
FIELD OF MILITARY PRODUCTION.)  
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## Message Attributes

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